



Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works

Date: January 7, 2003
To: Transportation and Public Works Committee
Referral to: None

**Subject: Chicago and Park Avenue Bridges over the Midtown Greenway
Conceptual Design Study Presentation**

Recommendation:

1. Present study findings to the T & PW Committee.
2. Make presentations to the Arts Commission and Planning Commission.
3. Return to T & PW Committee with comments and further direction.

Previous Directives: July 26, 2002 City Council Action for Study Funding

Prepared or Submitted by: Jon Wertjes, Transportation Engineer, 673-2614

Approved: Brian Lokkesmoe, P.E., Interim Director of Public Works

By: Gregory A. Finstad, P.E., Director, Transportation and Parking Services

Presenters in Committee: Jon Wertjes

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

☒ No financial impact - or - Action is within current department budget.
(If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)

☐ Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget

☐ Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget

☐ Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase

☐ Action requires use of contingency or reserves

☐ Other financial impact (Explain):

☐ Request provided to the Budget Office when provided to the Committee Coordinator

Community Impact (use any categories that apply)
See below and study report

Background/Supporting Information

See attached three page excerpt plus attachments from the March 13, 2002 Solicitation Request used to engage a consultant team. The consultant team lead by Julie Snow Architects was selected to complete the concept design study.

To accomplish the concept design work, Hennepin Community Works, City of Minneapolis Arts in Public Places Program and the Midtown Community Works Partnership (Abbott Northwestern Hospital and Target) funded the conceptual design work for the two bridges.

Recommendations

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2. Make presentations to the Arts Commission and Planning Commission.
3. Return to T & PW Committee with comments and further City direction.

Cc Council Member Lilligren, Chuck Ballentine, Mary Altman
Larry Blackstad, Hennepin County
Louis Smith, Smith Parker
Martha McQuade, Julie Snow Architects

SOLICITATION REQUEST FOR ARTIST AND CONSULTANT SERVICES

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN CHICAGO AND PARK AVENUE BRIDGES OVER THE MIDTOWN GREENWAY

1. OPENING STATEMENT AND PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The Midtown Greenway is an urban corridor crossing a network of urban communities, and will eventually link the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes and the Mississippi River to the western suburbs. The corridor is a rare railroad depression that cuts through urban neighborhoods across an entire city and since its construction in 1915 has been hidden from public view. Now, coordinated neighborhood, city, county, regional, and business efforts are turning this railroad trench into a six-mile bike, pedestrian, and transit connection that will open up this unique landmark to new transportation, recreation and general public use. The rededicated Greenway will play a major role in producing the economic, social, and environmental revitalization of the corridor as well as the adjacent Lake Street corridor.

There are forty-four grade-separated crossings of the railroad corridor as well as ten at-grade crossings. Table 1 lists these corridor grade separated crossings, aka *Midtown Crossings*. About thirty bridges (vintage 1915) above the corridor stretch the urban city fabric of Minneapolis over the Greenway trench. Aside from the grade separation, the primary feature of the Greenway visible to the user is this pattern of bridges. They create a rhythm that guides the user's experience and their uniformity reinforces the industrial and engineered quality that gives the corridor its character. The bridges have no independent historic significance, but coordinated and combined with the grade separation, they are part of a valuable historic place that has been determined eligible for the National Register. In a sense, the concrete bridges establish the rhythm of this industrial composition.

The City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County intend to repair, replace or remove the approximately thirty vintage 1915 bridges over the next thirty plus years. The Midtown Community Works (MCW) Partnership, representing leaders from the public and private sectors, views this bridge program as a community and civic opportunity. Their goal is to make each individual bridge a work of public art, while guaranteeing that the bridges as a group maintain a common rhythm and relationship to the overall composition. As people move through the Greenway or across these bridges, each bridge should create a distinct impression yet have a clear, consistent relationship with every other bridge.

The goal of incorporating and integrating public art and infrastructure requires a multi-disciplinary design process that draws on the talents of architects, landscape architects, engineers, public artists, and community representatives. Just as importantly, the bridges must be designed at a reasonable cost. The City, County and the MCW Partnership hope that incorporating creative design from the beginning will not result in any additional construction costs.

With these opportunities, challenges, and tools, the MCW Partnership believes that this bridge replacement project can set a high standard for the entire Greenway. This is a pivotal stage for shaping the Greenway, and with thoughtful, creative, and focused effort, the bridges will transform this corridor into a stunning feature of the Minneapolis urban landscape.

The first bridges facing replacement are at Chicago Avenue and Park Avenue. The City of Minneapolis, which owns the Chicago Avenue Bridge, and Hennepin County, which owns the Park Avenue Bridge, are collaborating to ensure that their new bridges will be compatible.

2. PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVE

The intention of this solicitation is to develop a conceptual design plan for artwork and bridges that provides a vision for the Midtown Crossings. This vision should address the short-term needs of these two specific bridges but also be grounded in design fundamentals that can be propagated and sewn among future bridges. These design fundamentals include:

- Functional requirements for the bridge infrastructure
- Industrial and historic bridges aesthetics and context
- Bridge design that itself is a work of art and at the same time supports the overall rhythm of bridges
- Public art as part of the infrastructure
- Setting a standard for future bridges
- Expression and respect of neighborhoods and their history
- Effective community design process
- Cost effectiveness and an appropriate maintenance plan
- Creating safe places and promoting safety in the corridor and along the streets

The premise of this study is that new artistic and well-designed bridges are desired for four important reasons:

- a) Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) purchased this corridor for transportation purposes. As such transit modes that have been explored and studied that could bring significant use to the corridor. Sufficient space must be allocated under each bridge for transit in the corridor.
- b) The City of Minneapolis in partnership with Hennepin County has developed a cross-town regional bicycle and pedestrian commuter trail in the corridor. Phase 1 of the Midtown Greenway Trail (31st/Chowen to 5th Avenue) was built and opened in August 2000. The Phase 2 Trail (5th Avenue to Hiawatha Avenue) passes through the project area. The Phase 2 Trail is in final design and will be constructed 2002/2003. Phase 3 Trail, east of Hiawatha, is scheduled for 2003 construction. The Phase 1 trail has brought considerable users into the corridor. Phases 2 and 3 are expected to expand the Trail's use. Each bridge is expected to provide access via a ramp from the street grade to the trail grade. These ramps have been preliminarily designed. The bridge design must accommodate these trail access ramps.
- c) The introduction of trail and future transit offers new opportunities to capture and enhance the economic potential of the area by linking them to this emerging infrastructure. New development or redevelopment is expected to encourage a diversity of uses and activities. Such diversity will complement the existing area while also creating opportunities to expand the area's vitality.
- d) The construction of public infrastructure offers an aesthetic and historic opportunity as well as a challenge to reshape the public realm in such a way as to tie together the neighborhoods and businesses. Infrastructure improvements should be integrated with the adjacent landscape and land uses. There are 16 neighborhoods that are part of or adjacent to the corridor and Lake Street. Each neighborhood brings a wealth of history, cultural diversity, and built environment along with its social and economic assets. These two bridges are located in the Phillips Neighborhood.

A design team is needed to assist the City and County with the conceptual design components for two bridges over the Midtown Greenway at Chicago and Park Avenues. This team will prepare

conceptual art and bridge elements that will be used and implemented by the City and County. Under separate initiatives, the County's bridge engineering staff and the City's bridge engineering consultant will be responsible for the plans, specifications, and engineering (PS&E) for these bridges. The design team will be responsible for the PS&E for the artwork.

The intent of this solicitation and resulting contract is to acquire the services of a qualified professional design team (Proposer) to perform the services described herein.

3. PROJECT LOCATION

The two bridges are located in south Minneapolis approximately 29 blocks south of Downtown, see Figures 1 and 2. Figure 3 presents current photographs of these two bridges. The Average Daily Traffic (ADT) over the Chicago and Park Avenue bridges is 11,400 and 11,100 vehicles per day, respectively.

There are numerous other activities in the surrounding area that may influence and contribute to the concept designs. In addition to the Chicago Avenue Bridge, the City of Minneapolis will reconstruct Chicago Avenue between 28th and Lake Streets. This reconstruction project will include street, curb and gutter, sidewalk, lighting, streetscape, etc. Abbott Northwestern Hospital is planning to expand its campus with a heart hospital addition. To accommodate this hospital addition, a new parking facility (ramp) is proposed for the southeast quadrant of the 28th Street and Chicago Avenue intersection. The Minneapolis Community Development Agency (MCDA) is pursuing the redevelopment of the former Sears building. Both commercial and residential uses are being explored. In the near future Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis will be reconstructing Lake Street with new street pavement, curb and gutter, sidewalk, lighting, traffic signals, streetscape, etc.

4. BRIDGE PROJECTS

Bridge Project	Construction Year	Construction Budget	Funding Sources	Sunset Dates
Chicago Ave	2003/2004	\$1,026,000	Federal, City	Sept 2003
Park Ave	2004/2005	\$1,343,000	Federal, County	Sept 2004

Attachments: Table 1 and Figures 1, 2 & 3